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INDIANAPOLIS GIRL'S NOVEL
HAS THE EXODUS FOR A THEMERemarkable Choice of Subject for a Young Writer's First Venture
in Fiction—An Admirable Production

It is not unusual in these days for young women to write and publish novels, but for the most part the books they produce are precisely such as young women might naturally be expected to write—light and superficial in theme and treatment. It is quite out of the common for a girl in her early twenties to create such a work of fiction as "The Yoke," just published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company.

The author, Miss Elizabeth Miller, familiarly known to her friends as "Bessie," is a resident of Indianapolis, having come to this city as a child with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Miller, from New Ross, Ind., her birthplace. She was educated in the public schools and while yet a pupil there developed a taste for literary pursuits. Her published work up to this time, however, has consisted of verses and letters contributed to a local paper, and while these indicated the possession of a pretty talent, nothing in them suggested the promise of really superior and serious work. "The Yoke" comes, therefore, as a surprise, even to those who knew Miss Miller's studious tendency and her literary ambitions. For "The Yoke" is a piece of fiction notable in itself without regard to its authorship, but the more remarkable, of course, when considered as the production of a very young writer.

It is a story of the Exodus, the opening scenes being laid in Egypt a year or two before the departure of the Israelites from their land of bondage. The story is told in the "Mosaic" as he is called, was preparing the way, and the feeling of unrest, the belief that the day of emancipation was at hand, stirred the Hebrews to restlessness. The heroine of the story is a young Israelite of great beauty; her husband, a Egyptian of distinction, who is a favorite in Pharaoh's court. The fortunes of these two form the chief part of the novel. The tale, though several other love stories are carried along through the narrative, the Pharaoh of the time, Ramses, his heir, the chief of the army; men of title and honor about the court; ladies of high degree, cup-bearers, soldiers, messengers—each and all with a part to play in the working out of the story. Besides these Egyptians are the Israelites—submissive slaves in the masses, but when the time comes, moving among them, towering above them, are Moses and Aaron and Miriam. Lower in importance, but with a more human quality, are Rachel, the heroine, and Deborah, the seeress.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS. Among the characters are Menephtah, the Pharaoh of the time; Ramses, his heir, the chief of the army; men of title and honor about the court; ladies of high degree, cup-bearers, soldiers, messengers—each and all with a part to play in the working out of the story. Besides these Egyptians are the Israelites—submissive slaves in the masses, but when the time comes, moving among them, towering above them, are Moses and Aaron and Miriam. Lower in importance, but with a more human quality, are Rachel, the heroine, and Deborah, the seeress.

THE VANISHED EGYPTIANS. Kenekenes, with many others, looked back and saw that the pillar illuminated, but no longer illuminating, had halted above a solitary figure of seemingly superhuman stature in the morning ray, standing on an eminence, overlooking the sea. The arm was uplifted and outstretched, tense and motionless. From his superior height, Kenekenes saw, over the heads of the immense concourse, two lines of foam riding like the wind across the seabed toward each other. Between them was a great body of plunging horses; overhead a forest of fluttering banners; and faint from the commotion came shouts and wild notes of trumpets. Then the two lines of foam smote against each other with a fearful rush and a muffled report, the commotion of surf. A mountain of water pitched high into the air and collapsed in a vast, dashing, wallowing sea. The falling wind dashed a sheet of spray over the silent host on the eastern shore. Sharp against the white foam, dark objects and masses sank, arose, and sank again.

At that moment the sun thrust a broad shaft of light between the horizon and the lifted clouds. It discovered only the sea, raving and stormy, and afar to the west a misty, hazy, and unrecognizable land. "And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them." This ends this story which, though it treats of a world-old theme, has about it a freshness and novelty which lend a new interest to the tale. Besides its romance itself, which is of sufficient interest to hold the attention of those who read it, the book is a masterpiece of the descriptions of scenes and events, the portrayal of life in old Egypt with which the reader is brought into contact. The accuracy of these pictures has been proved previous to publication by the submission of the manuscript to an Egyptologist who pronounced the archaeological and historical elements of the story to be not only spoken well for the thoroughness of the author's studies, but gives to the book an educational value. It is likely to find its place among the supplementary literature of Bible readers—those who desire an acquaintance with the history and conditions of ancient times, but have neither leisure nor opportunity for close and serious study. The story is not dramatic; it is a narrative told in a simple, straightforward way, but it is a book worth reading.

THE ARMY OF PURSUIT. To outline the plot of Miss Miller's story would be fair neither to author nor reader. It is enough to say that the incidents lead up to the Exodus itself and the fortunes of the persons in whom readers become most interested are not known until after the Red sea has been passed. While the Israelites were gathering at the seashore, Menephtah, under the persuasions of his leading general, followed them, but weakened at last of his resolve and ordered a retreat.

Angered at this order the general, Har-hut, rebelled against his master, called his troops to follow him, and, with a few followers, crossed the desert—sixty ranks, ten abreast. The left wing of the army, the vanguard, the dust of their rapid passage hiding their galloping mounts up to the stirrups. To the watcher by the King's side, the undulant sea of quilled helmets and flying tassels, while the sunlight smote through the level and straight forest of spears. They were seasoned veterans, many of them heroes of a quarter century of wars. They had followed Ramses the Great into Asia and had extended the empire and the prowess of arms to the distant corners of the known world. They had drunk the sweets of unalloyed victory from the Nile to the Euphrates and had filled Egypt with booty, scent with the airs of Arabia, gorged from the looms of India, and had followed Ramses the Great into Asia and had extended the empire and the prowess of arms to the distant corners of the known world. They had drunk the sweets of unalloyed victory from the Nile to the Euphrates and had filled Egypt with booty, scent with the airs of Arabia, gorged from the looms of India, and had followed Ramses the Great into Asia and had extended the empire and the prowess of arms to the distant corners of the known world.

Now they went in formidable array in pursuit of two millions of slaves to dye their axes in unrelenting blood. They were not as victors over a heroic foe, but as drivers of men, herds of sheep and cattle and laden with ignominious spoil. Behind them, in regular ranks, beaten by their drivers, an army of slaves moved like the sumpter mules, and after them the rumbling carts filled with provisions.

And now, rushing and weeping, saw his army leave him and gallop in an aureole of dust toward the Red sea. Thus it was that the Pharaoh drew nigh; but came no farther after Israel.

PASSAGE OF THE SEA. Here is a description of the passage across the Red sea.

"The Lawgiver had passed from among them, and those that followed him with their eyes saw that he was moving toward the sea, the seemingly at the very limit of the outer radiance and still going on. First to one and then to another it became apparent that the extent of the illuminated beach was widening. Hither and thither over the margin of the intelligence ran, in whispers or by glances, the glances of his neighbor, each looked again. Rippling, shimmering, the beach widened, and slowly came within the pale of the radiance, and Moses moved with it. Eight Hebrews, bearing a funeral ark, shrouded with a purple pall, fringed with gold, emerged from among the people, and,

MISS ELIZABETH MILLER.
Author of "The Yoke."

taking a place in front of the Lawgiver, walked confidently down the sand toward the east. "The radiance progressed step by step. Wet rocks entered the glow, lines of seaweed, immense drifts of debris, the brink of a ledge, the shadow before it, and then a sandy bottom, darkling here and there with a long line of old men, two abreast, the wind making the picture awesome as it tossed their beards and gray robes, followed the Lawgiver. After these several litterers, borne by young men, proceeded in imposing order.

"Except for the raving of the tempest there was no sound in Israel. The characters are numerous, and the story is told in the 'Mosaic' as he is called, was preparing the way, and the feeling of unrest, the belief that the day of emancipation was at hand, stirred the Hebrews to restlessness. The heroine of the story is a young Israelite of great beauty; her husband, a Egyptian of distinction, who is a favorite in Pharaoh's court. The fortunes of these two form the chief part of the novel. The tale, though several other love stories are carried along through the narrative, the Pharaoh of the time, Ramses, his heir, the chief of the army; men of title and honor about the court; ladies of high degree, cup-bearers, soldiers, messengers—each and all with a part to play in the working out of the story. Besides these Egyptians are the Israelites—submissive slaves in the masses, but when the time comes, moving among them, towering above them, are Moses and Aaron and Miriam. Lower in importance, but with a more human quality, are Rachel, the heroine, and Deborah, the seeress.

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